

ENJOY CHURCH BELIEFS

“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” Ephesians 4:2-3

A helpful way to think about doctrine is to separate it into it four different categories (adapted from Dr. Gary Breshears):

DIE FOR — Essentials that you would be martyred defending. These are essential gospel truths that if one were to abandon, they would be outside of the historic Christian faith and perhaps even salvation. Things in this category would include the virgin birth, the full-divinity of Jesus, the bodily resurrection, lordship of Jesus, etc. These are absolute ‘closed-hand’ issues.

DIVIDE FOR — These are passionate commitments. These are topics that churches may split over such as open practice vs. cessation of gifts of the Spirit, sexuality and marriage, women in leadership, etc. Divisions may be legitimate so long as the *overall unity of the body is affirmed* and the dividing points are truly central issues.

DEBATE FOR — Topics that matter and may cause tension, but mature Christians should be able to exist in the same congregation (e.g. predestination vs. free will, eschatological views, etc.) It’s important to keep ‘debate-for’ issues from escalating into ‘divide fors.’ We have to recognize that although we may hold strong opinions on certain topics, we must “make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification” (Romans 14:19).

DECIDE FOR — Topics that aren’t theological, but preferential. They are generally morally neutral and not necessarily grounded on Biblical principles but rather our own tastes and experience (e.g. drums in worship, dressing up for Halloween, reading/watching Harry Potter, Bible translation, etc). Legalism is a real danger when we latch onto ‘decide for’ topics and elevate them to a more important category.

“Divisive people are ones who elevate lower-level issues to divide fors. False teachers treat die for issues as questions open for humble discussion. As we utilize these levels as a community of believers, we can avoid the trap of being unnecessarily divisive on one hand and compromising the faith on the other.”
- Gary Breshears Mark Driscoll and in their book, *Vintage Church*

THE APOSTLE'S CREED

We affirm the Apostle's Creed as a historic and foundational confession of the Christian faith. It summarizes essential biblical truths about God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Church, and the hope of resurrection. While not Scripture itself, the Creed reflects the core doctrines handed down through the early Church and unites believers across generations in the truth of the gospel.

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father
almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic* church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

**that is, the universal Christian church of all times and all places*

STATEMENT OF FAITH

These are doctrines that the leadership of Enjoy Church has deemed essential for maintaining unity within our expression of the local church. All leaders/pastors are expected to understand and teach the following when applicable:

The Bible

We believe in the inspiration of the 39 Old Testament and 27 New Testament books [traditional canon] of Scripture; that both the Old Testament and the New Testament are the infallible Word of God in all matters of life and doctrine; that the Bible is completely relevant today for every area of the human experience because it is living and active; that the Bible is the final authority for faith and lifestyle. It is to be believed, practiced, trusted, and hoped in. The Bible is the final authority on all matters to which it speaks. (1 Cor. 2:13, 2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 1:21)

The Triune God

We believe that there is One true God, the eternally self-existing "I AM", who has revealed Himself to us in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe that the persons of the Trinity are co-eternal, co-equal, and yet with unique function. (Ex. 3:14; Deut. 6:4; Isa. 43:10, 11; Matt. 28; Jn. 8:58; 2 Cor. 13:14)

Jesus Christ

We believe Jesus Christ is the incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity. He is a distinct person from the Father and the Holy Spirit, yet of the same substance, two natures in One person (divine and human). We believe that Jesus Christ is God, the Son of God, who was incarnated as a human, was born of a virgin, was crucified, was buried, was resurrected, and is seated at the right hand of God on high. (Mt. 1:20; Mk. 16:19; Jn. 1:1, 14; 3:16; 20:1-2; 1 Cor. 15:3-5; Hebrews 2:17; Gal. 4:4 Phil. 2:8; 1 Pet. 3:22)

The Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity. He is a distinct person from the Father and the Son. He is God, sent by the Father to equip the Body of Christ. He convicts the world of sin, regenerates sinners, and in him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted into the family of God. The Holy Spirit is received at salvation and assists us in our weaknesses by enabling us to live victorious, bold, Christ-like lives through ongoing filling. (Jn. 14:16-26; Rom. 8:9, 26; Eph. 4:30, 5:18; 1 Cor. 12:7-11; Heb. 10:29)

Sin and the Fall of Humanity

We believe that humankind was created in the image of God but voluntarily sinned when tempted by Satan and fell short of God's righteousness. Sin is willful transgression of the law of God and is death. At the fall, humankind incurred spiritual death (which is spiritual separation from God) and physical death. All human beings are in union with Adam and are sinners by nature and by choice. Sin has alienated humankind from God and subjected it to his wrath. (Gen. 1:26, 27; 2:17; 3:6; Rom. 5:12-19)

Salvation and the Work of Christ

Humankind's hope of redemption is only possible through the life, ministry, death on the cross and the resurrection of Jesus. The redemption offered to humankind through the work of Christ must be received by repentance toward God and faith in Christ. Those who receive God's offer of grace by faith are born again, justified, regenerated, adopted into the family of God, made heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, on-going filling with the Holy Spirit, and are partakers of eternal life to come. (John 3:3; Acts 4:12; Eph. 1:7; Rom. 5:10; 8:14-17; 10:9-10; Titus 3:5-6)

The Church and God's Kingdom

We believe that the Church is the Body of Jesus Christ, who is its Head. The Church is composed of all those who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. The Church is manifest in local churches. The Church is being built up and made into the Bride of Christ, fully matured and presentable at Jesus's Second Coming. We believe the Church is a pillar of truth to the world because of the abiding story and presence of Jesus and the ongoing work and power of the Holy Spirit. The Church is an instrument of the Kingdom of God. We believe Jesus established his Kingdom through His life, ministry, death and resurrection and commissioned His Church to partner with Him in the renewal of all things. We live in the tension of the Kingdom 'already and not yet;' and we live expectantly, praying and partnering with God in seeing His Kingdom come on earth as it is in Heaven. (Matt 6:9-13, Matt. 16:18, 1 Cor. 12:13, Rom. 5:1, 5; Eph. 1:22-23, 4:11-17, 5:27; 1 Pet 2:9, Rev. 2-3)

Christ's Return and The New Heaven + New Earth

We believe in the personal, bodily, and glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now of His coming, which time is unknown, upon Christ's return, Christ will bring judgment, separate the wheat from the chaff, renew the earth, and reign as King forever. We believe that God is creating a New Heavens and a New Earth where humans will dwell forever with God. The imminent coming of Christ should inspire godly living and commitment to the mission of the Gospel. (Isa. 65:17, Matt. 24:30, Acts 1:11, 1 Cor. 15:50-54, 1 Thess. 4:16-17, Rev. 19:11-22:21)

Hell

We believe in the existence of hell as a reality taught in Scripture. While recognizing that interpretations of hell may vary within the bounds of orthodoxy (e.g. annihilation/conditional immortality and eternal conscious torment), we reject views advocating for universal salvation or ultimate reconciliation, affirming instead the biblical doctrine of eternal consequences for unrepentant sin and spiritual death. We believe that those who reject God's offer of grace and forgiveness and whose names are not found in the book of Life will be raised and judged in the resurrection of the wicked. (Matt. 25:46, Mark 9:43-48, Rev. 19:20, 20:11-15, 21:8)

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Church at Pentecost in power, baptizing believers into the Body of Christ and releasing the gifts of the Spirit to them. The Spirit brings the permanent indwelling presence of God to us for spiritual worship, personal sanctification, building up the Church, gifting us for ministry, and driving back the kingdom of Satan by the evangelization of the world through proclaiming the word of Jesus and doing the works of Jesus.

We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Jesus Christ and that He is our abiding Helper, Teacher, and Guide. We believe in the filling and the empowering of the Holy Spirit for ministry today. We believe in the present ministry of the Spirit and in the exercise of all of the biblical gifts of the Spirit. The purpose of the gifts is to equip the Church to carry out its mission until Christ returns, as well as to be a foretaste of the life to come. Believers should seek God in prayer for the gifts of the Spirit to operate in their own lives and ministries and should not only agree to them theoretically, but practice them outwardly as the Spirit leads. (Rom. 1:11; 1 Cor. 1:5, 7; 12:1, 31; 1 Cor. 14:12; 2 Tim. 1:6-7; Heb. 6:5)

Philosophy of Ministry

We are passionate about fulfilling the Great Commission given by Jesus to make disciples of all nations. Our philosophy of ministry is rooted in the belief that the Church exists not only for its own sake but to advance the Kingdom of God and proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth. We believe that healthy, vibrant, and multiplying churches are essential for the fulfillment of the Great Commission and the advancement of the Kingdom. Therefore, we dedicate ourselves to equipping, training, partnering with, and sending out church planters to reach communities with the Good News of Jesus, disciple new believers, and establish healthy expressions of the local church. (Matt. 28:16-20, Acts 1:8, Rom. 10:14-15)

Church Government

We believe that God has appointed elders within His church to shepherd, oversee, and guide His people. These governing elders are men of godly character, chosen and recognized based on the qualifications outlined in Scripture. They are called to faithfully teach the Word, provide spiritual care and counsel, and exercise servant leadership in the body of Christ. As an elder-led church, we believe in the plurality of eldership, recognizing that no single individual possesses all the gifts, wisdom, or insights necessary to lead the church effectively. Therefore, decisions regarding the direction, vision, and major matters of the church are made collectively by the elders, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in accordance with the principles and teachings of Scripture.

We joyfully embrace the biblical mandate for submission under the leadership of our governing elders. This submission is not one of blind obedience but is rooted in a recognition of God's ordained authority structures for his church and a commitment to unity, love, and mutual edification within the body of believers. (1 Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Pet. 5:5, 1 Tim. 5:17, Heb. 13:17)

Generosity and Missions

We believe that generosity and mission work is not solely the responsibility of the local church institution, but rather a call to every individual follower of Christ. We believe in the power of personal initiative in advancing the Kingdom of God. We recognize that the local church plays a crucial role in equipping and supporting believers in their mission endeavors. However, we reject the notion that mission work should be delegated solely to the organized structures of the church. Instead, we embrace a model where individual believers are empowered and encouraged to be the Church—to take active roles in sharing the Gospel, serving their communities, and meeting the needs of others (Matt. 28:16-20; 1 Cor. 9:6-7, Rom. 12:13, Acts 2:44-45, Gal. 6:10, Prov. 19:7)

Marriage

We believe God has ordained marriage as a covenant relationship between one biological man, one biological woman, and Himself. God's purpose in this is that marriage be a symbol of two different things coming together to reflect something new. Fundamental to marriage is God's design for how both men and women reflect God's image into the world, together. Human marriage, defined by Jesus as the lifelong covenantal union of two sexually-different-yet-equal persons, is a temporary signpost pointing to far a greater cosmic reality—the ultimate union of Heaven and Earth. (Gen. 2:24, Matt. 19:4, Eph. 5:25, 1 Pet. 3:7)

Gender

We believe that from the beginning God created two separate and distinct biological sexes: male and female. Moreover, we believe that Scripture does not permit any difference between biological sex and gender identity or expression. Humankind has been created by God and any attempt to misconstrue the difference between male/female and/or biological sex/gender identity is an attempt to self-create and is a result of the fall and is sin. (Gen. 1:26-27, Matt. 19:4, Mark 10:6-7, Psalm 139:14)

Sexuality

As temples for the Holy Spirit, we acknowledge that what we do with our bodies matters to God and we are called to live in holy action. We believe that LGBTQ+ individuals are created in the image of God, loved radically by God, with inherent dignity, value, and worth, with great gifts to bring to God's world and to the body of Christ, and that Jesus calls all who follow him to honor and treat them as such. Enjoy Church holds to the traditional sexual ethic: that any sexual activity outside of marriage (between one man and one woman) is sin, and calls both straight and LGBTQ+ followers of Jesus to commit their bodies and hearts to Jesus. (Gen. 1:31, Rom. 1:21-25, Isa. 53, 1 Cor. 6:19, 1 Cor. 9:26-27, 1 Cor. 6:13)

Right to Life

We believe that all human life is valuable and sacred, and that human life and full personhood begins at conception and continues until natural death. As stewards of life, we are endowed by God with the responsibility to protect the worth and dignity of human beings from the moment of conception until the moment of death. Therefore, we oppose taking innocent life in all forms, including abortion and euthanasia. (Gen. 1:26-27, Job 31:15, Ps. 22:10, Ps. 127:3-5, Ps. 139:13-16, Jer. 1:5, Acts 17:25)

Women in Leadership

We believe that women and men are created equal in the image of God. We believe that equality between men and women does not mean women and men are completely the same. This distinction in gender represents an essential characteristic of personhood and reflects an essential part of being created in God's image. Both men and women are necessary for the health and ministry of the church. Godly men and women should be empowered to lead within the church as God raises up leaders on the basis of grace, calling, spiritual gifts, character and obedience. We believe women and men should lead, preach, pastor and minister within the church. We believe women and men can and should serve in pastoral leadership. Every role, except the office of governing elder in the local church, is open to women. (Gen. 1:27-28; Matt. 19:4; Mark 10:6, 1 Corinthians 12:7, Romans 11:29)

The Difference Between Agreement and Acceptance

We must differentiate between agreement and acceptance. One of the truly fascinating aspects of the life of Jesus is that the very people whose lives least aligned with His ethical teachings were most drawn to Him. His dinner company and close friends are made up of people out-of-alignment with His teaching (e.g. Jesus teaches that to even look at a woman lustfully is to commit adultery, then is consistently surrounded by prostitutes who profited on lust; Jesus teaches an ethic of radical generosity, then welcomes a tax collector, whose life was defined by greed, into His inner circle of 12 disciples; etc.). In modern cultural rhetoric, agreement and acceptance are often used synonymously: "If you don't agree with my ethical choices (belief), you don't accept me (expression)." However, in Jesus, we observe the opposite phenomenon: Those who felt most accepted in His presence were those most obviously living in disagreement with His teaching. Therefore, as a church we are committed to becoming a community linked to Jesus in both agreement and acceptance. We are unapologetically aligned with every word of Scripture's teaching. At the same time, we are uncompromisingly insistent on becoming the sort of community where those out-of-alignment with His beliefs feel welcome and accepted in our fellowship. (Matt. 9:10-17, Mark 2:15-22, Luke 5:29-32)

Unity

We believe in unity among the essentials and liberty among non-essentials. We embrace diversity of opinions and theology, finding it more edifying and Christ-like to build bridges when it comes to peripheral doctrinal matters (i.e., eschatological interpretations, Calvinism/Arminianism, etc.) versus drawing lines of division. Because of this, our volunteers and leaders are comprised of diverse theological backgrounds and are encouraged to be respectful and inquiring toward one another in the spirit of Christian unity. (Ps. 133:1, Acts 15:1-21, Eph. 4:3, Phi. 2:2, 2 Cor. 13:11)